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For the Virginian.

The East Tennessee Raid.

Messrs. Editors:

I do not offer myself as the champion of any one, but realizing, as I do, the manner in which the great mass of public opinion is formed, I feel it my bounden duty to say a few words in reply to the article promulgated by the Editor of the Advocate, assisted by the Post Commander at Bristol, relative to the recent Yankee raid in E. Tenn. First: So far as the editor is concerned, I would simply remark, that being no General myself, I feel a delicacy in criticizing the proofs he has given to the world of his genius in that line. But unfortunately for a proper appreciation of his merit in the minds of some, he demonstrates himself after the difficulties he treats of have passed away. He is evidently, though, a great General, and if his fore-sight prove as good as his hind-sight, he is no doubt a gun that will drive the centre every shot. I can only regret that such ability is lying in "cold obstruction," while our country needs it, to command her armies in the field. Had Gen. Marshall been aware of his presence in our midst, I don't suppose he would have presumed to have taken the command of his forces in his recent effort to capture the enemy. And whilst I hesitate to offer any objections to the Editor's conclusions, I do not fear ranging beside them a few truths, and I propose doing so in as brief a manner as possible. When my own personal knowledge has been at fault, I have appealed for facts to officers competent to give them. I therefore speak confidently as appertains to my own, and advisedly in regard to the statements of others.

The enemy entered the State of Va., through Crank's Gap, in the Cumberland Mountains, on the night of the 28th of December, and as was to be expected, their presence was not discovered until the morning of the 29th, and information of their movements was not received by Gen. Marshall until about 10 o'clock the same night. Said information gave their force as 4,000, and located them at Patton'sville, Scott Co., at 1 o'clock that day. The dispatch containing it was received from Morristown, within the military district of E. Tenn., and it was reasonable to suppose that the authorities of said district received information at the same time. I have not consulted with Gen. Marshall, and do not know what his ideas were as to the intended movements of the enemy. I merely judge of him by how he acted in the premises. He immediately telegraphed the information to the Commandants of his various corps, and began the concentration of his necessarily scattered forces. Why they were scattered in this eaten-out and half provided country need not be explained to any one. The intention of the enemy, when this news was received, was not known, and there was no means of conjecturing it. That he came to do damage no one doubted, and there were two points at which, from his then position, he could strike a stunning blow—the Salt-Works, in the district of Gen. Marshall, and the rail road bridges, in the district of E. Tenn. Now, where was Gen. Marshall's first duty? According to the Editor and "Post Commander," he should have advanced to the rescue of E. Tenn.

If this be the case, and Gen. Marshall is expected to protect the department of E. Tenn., he ought to be so instructed by the War Department, and have the force placed at his disposal to do so. A regiment of his cavalry was posted only a short time since a few miles within the precincts of said department, and directly in the line of approach taken by the enemy in their recent raid.—Gen. Smith did not deem their presence of any importance to its military defence, and ordered them out—when the hour of need arrived they were 50 miles away.

Gen. Marshall's first dispositions were made by throwing a regiment of his cavalry forward so as to cover the approach to the Salt Works, around which point a battalion of artillery was that night concentrated. A regiment of infantry and two battalions of cavalry were concentrated at Bristol, to protect that place and the line of rail road intervening between here and there. On the morning of the 30th, and as soon as the probable intentions of the enemy became known, Gen. Marshall immediately began to rush preparations for sending all his available force to Bristol, which point the Post Commander and others telegraphed him was hourly expected to be attacked. There was reported rolling stock sufficient at this point in the morning to have forwarded Col. Hawkins' battalion of infantry at once. It was ordered to the depot, but

when the Col. arrived there, he reported to the Gen. that the transportation upon which he had relied, had disappeared in the direction of Bristol. The Gen. telegraphed to the agent at that place to have the cars immediately returned, who permitted an hour and a half to elapse before any reply was made at all; he then dispatched to know whether Gen. Marshall ordered them to return, and being answered in the affirmative, quietly replied to the Gen. that he must first get an order from the Superintendent at Lynchburg, before he could comply. After still further delay, the order was procured from Lynchburg, but the transportation did not arrive until about 7 o'clock in the evening—Col. Hawkins' command waiting at the depot for it from about 11 A. M. until that hour. Col. Gilmer's regiment of cavalry had in the mean time been ordered from its position in the neighborhood of Lebanon to join the main force at Bristol with all possible dispatch. The cars got off from this point about 8 o'clock, but were delayed by becoming stalled on the way from arriving at Bristol until between 11 and 12 that night. The enemy had then burned the bridge at Zollinger and Watauga, and the last news received from him was that he was proceeding westward from those points with the probable intention of committing further depredations in that direction. Gen. Marshall had with him at this time about 800 infantry and 300 cavalry, with two batteries of artillery.

On the morning of the 31st, information was received that the enemy had turned back in the direction of Blountville, which made it appear that he had begun his retreat.

To pursue him with infantry and artillery was impossible; and to pursue him (2,000 strong) with but 300 cavalry with any hope of capturing him, was foolish. Gen. Marshall, therefore, waited for Gilmer's cavalry to come up, which did so about 2 o'clock in the day, having ridden a distance of 37 miles without halting for a moment. As soon as the horses could be fed, the command was again put in motion, together with Clay's and Johnson's battalions, in all about 800 men. The enemy had about 12 hours the start—he was pursued, however, a distance of 80 miles, and his rear guard overtaken about sundown on the 2d of January, at Jonesville. Skirmishing immediately began, but before Gen. Marshall got possession of the town, night had closed in upon us, and the advance guard of the enemy was pressing out at the Gap by which they entered the Department. In this pursuit, the major portion of the command had traveled a distance of about 120 miles, and the whole with but a single meal to eat. The course of the enemy was not obstructed in any way by the people of the country from the time they entered until they left the State, and what is still more remarkable, not one particle of information was received from the same source relative to their movements.—General Marshall moved entirely by his own judgment, and from information derived from his own scouts. Much of the most important information he received even from this latter source, subsequent developments proved to be incorrect.

Gen. Marshall's conduct throughout will bear the closest scrutiny of any intelligent criticism. If the people of the country or "the powers that be" are not satisfied with his inactivity, all they will have to do will be to unloose the shackles that are upon him, or place him in some situation where his talents may have an opportunity to illustrate themselves. He has, from first to last, been hampered down to a diminutive mountain district, and what General, either of this or any other country, ever distinguished himself in mountain warfare? Gen. Lee, the present eyecore of every eye, failed signally in his mountain campaign—and Gen. Rosecrans, the ablest of our foes, who was pitted against him, fared no better. Gen. Marshall received a military education, and has had the military experience of a former war. At the breaking out of hostilities, no man enjoyed a higher reputation than he; and now, because he does not rise superior almost to fate itself, he must needs be subjected to the petty criticism of every popinjay Post Commander, maudlin editor or cross-roads critic, who chooses to appear in print.

I have thus traced briefly the course of the enemy in and out of the State. I now propose to turn back and review the official report of Maj. General, "the Post Commander." Were the egotism, nonsense, and false assertions taken out of his report, I really cannot see what would be left of it. I don't blame the writer for putting his name in print—his apparent conviction of self-importance is a sufficient apology for that. I do not deem, however, the same apology sufficient for his false and contradictory statements, since I have been taught in moral philosophy, that when a man makes an assertion as true, he should first ascertain it to be such. I shall be as brief in my extracts from his report as circumstances will allow. First he says, "I learned on the morning of the 30th, that the enemy, instead of coming from Estillville to this place, had turned to the right in the direction of Blountville, which satisfied me they were aiming for Holston Bridge."—Now if the Post Commander really did get this information, why did he not telegraph it immediately to his superior at Knoxville? There was ample time to have ordered reinforcements even from that distance. Again, why did he not telegraph it to Gen. Marshall at Abingdon? Instead of imparting this important information, he telegraphs as follows: "Enemy reported in twenty miles of this place last night. Three of his scouts were captured 12 miles from here,"—and not one word was said about a movement toward Hol-

ston Bridge. This dispatch was received from him at 10 o'clock A. M.

Again, after detailing the result of a consultation with Col. Stemp relative to a dispatch that he (Col. Stemp) had received from Col. Clay, that the enemy were moving in the direction of Holston Bridge, and which was really the first intimation he (the Post Commander) had to that effect, and by which consultation it was agreed to move to its protection, he says: "Whilst I was at the Tenn. Depot hurrying up the trains, some unreliable messenger came in and reported the enemy within three miles of this place, when Col. Stemp, in the face of his dispatch from Lieut. Col. Clay, that the enemy were gone to the Holston, moved his regiment in the direction of Blountville, without advising me of it or the least consultation."

To show how much reliance the Post Commander put in this last information, as also the former, we find him telegraphing to Gen. Marshall between 1 and 2 P. M. about which time the bridges were burning as fast as fire could consume them: "Enemy reported within three miles of this place. Have moved out our forces to meet them. Send us reinforcements and ammunition. Detachment is reported moving on Holston Bridge." Here we have the Post Commander, by his own admission, and in the face of his direct information to the contrary, telegraphing General Marshall, that the main body of the enemy was in three miles of Bristol, whilst a mere detachment was moving upon Holston Bridge. It looks treacherable. Again, he says in his report: "Our available force at this time consisted of some 500 cavalry and 800 infantry, and the enemy operating against us at the Holston showed some 1,400." To illustrate that the Post Commander knew these figures to be false when he penned them, I will extract from a dispatch forwarded by him to Gen. Marshall at the time, viz:—"We have some two pieces of artillery with canister and shrapnel." A discrepancy between the true and false statements of 450 men. Again, he continued: "Had Col. Stemp done his plain duty, as I urged him, and gone to the Holston, we would have saved the bridges and probably captured the whole Federal force." This assertion I hardly know what to think of, when I reflect that at the very time the Post Commander was urging Col. Stemp to go to their protection, the bridges were in the possession of the enemy and in process of destruction. To demonstrate this point better, I have only to make an extract from his own writing, viz:—"A short time after, one of my couriers came in with dispatches that the Bridge Guard had been surrounded on the morning of the 30th by 1,400 Federal cavalry, and had surrendered without firing a gun."

Here it will be seen by his own showing, that the bridges were captured on the morning of the 30th, and yet he was urging a garrison for their protection between 1 and 2 o'clock in the evening. Again, he says: "On the morning of the 31st, Gen. Marshall was reinforced by a strong regiment of cavalry, numbering some 600 to 800 men." A brief extract, but contains two falsehoods. The regiment was Col. Gilmer's, and consisted of about 500 men, and arrived about 2 o'clock in the evening. After detailing the result of a reconnaissance down the railroad on the morning of the 31st, and by which his scouts returned with the information that "the enemy were then (11 A. M.) encamped on Snapp's farm, four miles below Blountville"—he continues: "I communicated to Gen. Marshall at once, and confidently expected him to move his 1,200 cavalry in the direction of Blountville." This must be taken as a joke. Gen. Marshall at no time had more than 800 cavalry, and at 11 A. M., the time the Post Commander "confidently" expected him to move his 1,200 cavalry, &c., he had but 300 cavalry to move. I am sorry that the General, owing to circumstances, was unable to fill the Commander's expectations.

I shall not criticize the opinions set forth in this remarkable General's official report—some of them are so ridiculous as scarce to admit it. I have made a few extracts from his literary performances, simply to show his consistency. I cannot close, however, without adverting to a statement contained in one of his most forcible paragraphs. I had thought, that even among the most gifted masters of the art of war, that there was a certain amount of schooling coupled with a moiety of experience necessary, before even the greatest bound into the arena where battles are lost and won, but in this instance, we have a full-fledged General suddenly appearing in our midst, who pounces with astonishing ferocity upon one of his fellow associates, and with a few dashes of the pen, when the events he would guide, have all transpired, effectually disposes of his antagonist, and writes himself down one of the greatest Captains of the age. For instance:—"Had my plans of operations been adopted and carried out, the bridges would have been saved and the enemy captured."

Here we have a modest declaration of this wonderful man's estimate of his own ability. It is not given as a matter of opinion, but asserted as a solemn and much-to-be-regretted fact. I may safely claim that no other General—not even among the Casars, the Napoleons and the Hannibals—ever before stole the power which properly belongs to Divinity to assist them in their military movements. An appreciative country should, and I believe will at once arise, and with the majesty of its power, insist that the President place in supreme command of our armies, this newly discovered and supernatural child of the west. Victory would no longer be a matter of speculation, depending upon the comparative strength of the opposing armies, or the strategic moves and combinations formed by

such men as Lee and Johnston, but a moral certainty derived from a thorough knowledge of the great law of cause and effect. I for one am willing to yield him the palm—but only so far as his power of divining events is concerned, for I find that he, like most mortals, has been liable to be led astray in his statement of facts, and still farther, like other mortals, (especially when they have been afflicted by an inordinate amount of self-conceit,) has been prone to talk about things of which he knew nothing more than the man in the moon. VERITAS.

Abingdon, Jan. 11th, 1863.

Synopsis of the President's Message.

RICHMOND, January 14. The annual message of President Davis was read in Congress to-day.

It opens with a view of the military position of affairs, which are described as very satisfactory.

The fourth great army of invasion has been defeated in Virginia, and General Burnside has experienced the fate of his three predecessors, McDowell, McClellan and Pope.

In the West the fortunes of war have been various. Battles have been fought with fearful carnage on both sides, but the hopes of the enemy of any decisive result have been baffled.

On the Atlantic coast the enemy are still confined to the protecting cover of their fleets.

A review of our history shows that the war has now entered its third and last stage. The first effort was to restore the Union, and has been abandoned. The second was to conquer the South and govern it as dependency of the North; this too has proven impossible and has been abandoned. The third design is to destroy and plunder what they could not subjugate. If we continue the same efforts as in the past this design will likewise be defeated, and we may confidently expect that this is the closing year of the war. The enemy will possess neither spirit nor resources for continuing it the fourth year in so exhaustive a scale. We desire peace, but will continue the war at any sacrifice until our rights to self-government and the sovereignty and independence of the States are vindicated and established.

Our foreign relations are next reviewed.—Our right to recognition is shown by reference to the past history of other States, some of which were recognized as independent by Great Britain in the treaty of peace of 1783, and had been previously allies in war with France. When our commissioners demanded recognition, they were told that foreign governments could not decide between the conflicting statements made by our government and that of the United States in respect to our mutual relations, and that Europe could simply recognize us as belligerents and preserve a strict neutrality. This apparent refusal to decide was in reality against us, because we were then unjustly deprived of diplomatic intercourse on the same footing as our enemies.

The question of the blockade is discussed at length. Its invalidity is shown, as tested by the principles of the Congress of Paris in 1856. The whole conduct of neutral nations is summed up so as to show that they have enforced all neutral rights that effected us injuriously, and refrained from asserting those that would injure the United States.

The correspondence between the Courts of France, Great Britain and Russia, is adverted to. The language of the French dispatch is construed as a formal admission of our ability to maintain our independence, and justifies the hope of early recognition.

The barbarities committed by the Northern troops are referred to, and the action taken in relation to the atrocities committed by Generals Butler, McNeil and Milroy explained.—The opinion is expressed that the infamy of their superiors, who have, in no one instance, punished the perpetrators of these crimes.

In relation to Lincoln's proclamation, the President says our detestation is tempered by profound contempt for his impotent rage.—The action of the government will be confined to delivering up all commissioned officers hereafter captured in the ten States named in the proclamation, to be tried by the States under the laws which punish those that excite servile insurrection. The proclamation is treated as possessing great significance in a political view. It proves what were the designs of the republican party from the beginning, notwithstanding their efforts to conceal them by false declarations. The proclamation is next considered as a guarantee against the possibility of reconstruction. It is also treated as a confession of incapability to subjugate the South, which Europe will be bound to consider as justifying our immediate recognition or an intimation to the people of the North, that they must submit to a final separation of the States.

The message, which is the longest yet issued by the President, embraces a comprehensive review of the whole internal and external relations of the country. It is confident, even triumphant in tone, and closes with a tribute to our women, without whose sublime sacrifices it declares that our success would have been impossible.

The Confederate Finances.

RICHMOND, Jan. 15th.

The report of the Secretary of the Treasury shows that from the commencement of the permanent Government, to 31st December, the receipts were \$457,855,000; expenditures \$443,400,000,000.

Estimated amount to be raised by Congress, to 1st July, \$4,000,000.

The debt of the Government on the 1st inst. was \$550,000,000, including 88 bonds, 50 deposit certificates, 272 general currency and 120 of seven thirty notes.